

**MINUTES OF THE  
HATTIESBURG CONVENTION COMMISSION  
&  
MANAGEMENT**

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center on...

**October 27, 2022**

Be it remembered that on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission (HCC) met. The meeting was called to order at **12:09 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chair of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Aubrey Lucas  
Clyde Bryant  
Andy Stetelman  
Charles Brown  
Traci Rouse

**ABSENT**

Charlie Jones

**ALSO PRESENT**

Rick Taylor, Management  
Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Traci Rouse and, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting.

**Financial Report**

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Report including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, Revenue and Capital Expansion Funds for ratification. A motion was made by Andy Stetelman, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

A motion was made by Clyde Bryant, duly seconded by Aubrey Lucas, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to ratify the Capital Expansion as presented. The following Board Members abstained: Andy Stetelman, Charles Brown and Traci Rouse.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse, duly seconded by Charles Brown, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the budget as presented.

**Legal Report**

Attorney Carey Varnado gave the Board an update on the status of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) house at Kamper Park. He informed the Board that the UDC case is officially closed. The UDC has chosen not to appeal at this time. Charles Brown requested that the Board through these Minutes recognize the UDC for their contribution to the preservation of Kamper Park.

### **Old Business**

Salem Bunkheila explained to the Board, that due to the increasing interest rates, the HCC has had to be creative in finding ways to offset the debt service. He added that interest rates have escalated from 2% to 5%. Plans to work with the City of Hattiesburg to determine other funding options will be discussed soon.

Rick Taylor updated the Board on the development of the waterpark. He announced that the dirt work and concrete pads for Serengeti Springs are being installed. The HCC has taken delivery of some of the apparatus and all construction is on schedule. He added that the HCC is consulting with Salem and Associates marketing firm with plans to begin implementing the new marketing strategies in January 2023. Taylor shared with the Board that he attended the National Waterpark Association conference and learned vital information that he has presented to HCC staff. He has established a weekly meeting with key staff members to stay on task with what is needed to open the waterpark.

The Saenger Theater's plaster has been repaired. River Prince has completed the painting of the border.

The Eureka wall is set to unveil during Black History Month 2023. Oseola McCarty's house has received all internal repairs. Rick Taylor has been in contact with Dr. Kenyatta, JSU Professor, to receive assistance in the creation of exhibits for the museum.

Herb Cornelius is working on bids for the Moller Vehicle Museum. The HCC is currently paying for the storage of the military vehicles.

Taylor also informed the Board that the movie *Devotion*, the story of Jesse Leroy Brown will debut in November 2022. He explained that the Sixth Street Museum staff have been in negotiations with Sony to have the movie shown at the Saenger Theater for a red carpet event.

Lastly, Rick Taylor informed the Board that the hyena had a pup. The Hattiesburg Zoo plans to release the video footage of the birth online soon. He also gave the Board a brief update regarding the Zoo's pursuit of accreditation. Jeremy Cumpton, Director of Conservation, Education and Animal Care is continuing to work towards Associations of Zoo and Aquariums (AZA) accreditation. He explained that the Zoo's AZA mentor has left the zoo profession, and a visit from a new mentor has not been determined. Kristen Moore, Animal Curator is in the process of pursuing a Zoological Association of America (ZAA) accreditation.

### **New Business**

A motion was made by Charles Brown to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of personnel matters and possible litigation. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present. A subsequent motion was made by Andy Stetelman to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel matters and possible litigation. This motion was seconded by Traci Rouse and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present. The Commissioners present entered into Executive Session.

During Executive Session, the Board voted to cancel an active professional services contract. A motion was made by Andy Stetelman to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Charles Brown and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned.

*Traci Rouse excited the meeting.*

## Operational Report


All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Andy Stetelman to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Charles Brown and upon receiving a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center on...

**December 1, 2022**

Be it remembered that on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission (HCC) met. The meeting was called to order at **12:15 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chair of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Clyde Bryant  
Andy Stetelman  
Charlie Jones via Zoom

**ABSENT**

Charles Brown  
Aubrey Lucas  
Traci Rouse

**ALSO PRESENT**

Rick Taylor, Management  
Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Clyde Bryant and, duly seconded by Charlie Jones, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting.

**Financial Report**

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Report including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, and Revenue for ratification. A motion was made by Clyde Bryant, duly seconded by Charlie Jones, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

A motion was made by Clyde Bryant, duly seconded by Charlie Jones, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to ratify the Capital Expansion as presented. The following Board Members abstained: Andy Stetelman.

A motion was made by Clyde Bryant, duly seconded by Charlie Jones, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the budget as presented.

Rick Taylor requested that the Board ratify an emergency expenditure to W.A Warren Construction Company, Inc. for the installation of asphalt at the north and south driveway of the City of Hattiesburg Water Department near the Serengeti Springs construction site. He explained to the Board that by widening the road another 2 feet it will prevent water flow to the tennis courts, avoid unintentional flooding by the temporary drive, and accommodate bi-directional traffic. A motion was made by Andy Stetelman, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to ratify the emergency expenditure to W.A Warren Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$22,280.

### **Legal Report**

Attorney Carey Varnado informed the Board that there was no pending litigation at this time. He gave the Board a brief update on the cancellation of the professional services contract as discussed during the previous meeting.

### **Old Business**

Rick Taylor updated the Board on the Serengeti Springs waterpark's progress. He informed the Board that he has instructed staff members to begin purchasing uniforms, furnishings, equipment, water safety supplies, etc. Scott Humphries, Project Manager, is onsite every day and the construction is on schedule.

The Eureka wall installation is on schedule. The footers and masonry have been completed. Rick Taylor commended the Eureka Wall Committee and its instrumental role in selecting the Hattiesburg natives that will be presented.

Salem Bunkheila gave the board an update on the success of concerts at the Lawn at Lake Terrace. He gave a geographical presentation that demonstrated that the ZZ Top Concert attracted guests from 18 states and 2 countries. He added that the addition of a new metal detection device accelerated the admittance of guests. He is currently meeting with Red Mountain Entertainment to create a new concept for the amphitheater with the intent of decreasing the projected costs of the amphitheater.

Rick Taylor added that there were parking issues with the ZZ Top Concert and discussed plans to increase parking after the construction of the amphitheater.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the Pirate Battle theme in the Pocket Museum Alley had a record-breaking 20,000 visits - the largest attendance in a single month.

Lastly, Salem Bunkheila invited the Board to attend the Lights of the Wild event at the Hattiesburg Zoo. He added that the Zoo will debut 500 new Christmas-themed lanterns.

### **New Business**

There was no New Business to discuss during this meeting.

### **Operational Report**

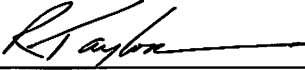
All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Clyde Bryant to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and upon receiving a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director